

Compiled Themes by Group

In the summer of 2003 the Planning, Economic Development, and Environmental Advisory commissions met to kick off the Town Plan rewrite by discussing their desires for the future of the town. Later in the summer and throughout the fall, the Planning Commission sponsored a series of public meetings, including five sector meetings and four visioning session meetings, to gather the same information from the general public. Planning staff also held a number of sessions with students at Heritage High School and collected citizens' emails in response to information on the Town Plan webpage. A thorough review of all of those comments and the patterns found of those most prevalent yielded the themes listed below. These themes were reviewed and accepted by the three commissions and members of the public attending a meeting on 17 June 2004.

Group 1—Land Use

1. Theme: Focus on infill projects and redevelopment of underutilized sites as well as mixed-use projects.
2. Theme: Encourage more commercial development and high-tech, high-quality employers to locate in town, particularly around the airport.
3. Theme: Achieve neighborhood diversity through a mix of housing types, prices, ages and cultures.
4. Theme: Collaborate with the county on planning for the UGA and annex land for non-residential development.
5. Theme: Locate a park and ride at the intersection of the Dulles Greenway and Battlefield Parkway; provide rail and bus service as well as automobile and bicycle accessibility.
6. Theme: Improve streetscape to complement and provide a smooth transition to the historic district with buried utilities, street trees, sidewalks and lighting.
7. Theme: Ensure development at town gateways is carefully considered in terms of aesthetics.
8. Theme: Encourage more pedestrian-friendly shopping and retail variety instead of boilerplate franchise development with poor vehicular circulation and garish color schemes that detracts from Leesburg's character.
9. Theme: Improve downtown parking with aesthetically pleasing, multi-use parking garages (include retail component to hide facades).

10. Theme: Require developers to offset all costs for new development (schools, parks, infrastructure, etc.).
11. Theme: Make town greener; plant more trees.
12. Theme: Promote building on a gridded system; prohibit cul-de-sacs.

Group 1—Parks and Recreation

1. Theme: Preserve and protect existing open spaces, public and private parks in Leesburg and in Loudoun County.
2. Theme: Provide a full range of parks and open spaces, including the creation of pocket parks and open spaces for passive recreation, as well as new parks for active recreational facilities.
3. Theme: Provide recreational programs and facilities for all ages and interests, including teenagers (teen centers), senior citizens (senior centers) and dog owners (dog parks).
4. Theme: Ensure that the sidewalk and trail system provides town- and region-wide connectivity to other trails, communities, and significant natural and community resources.
5. Theme: Construct a riverwalk along Tuscarora Creek to highlight its importance.
6. Theme: Continue to improve Ida Lee Park with an outdoor pool and trail accessibility.

Group 2—Cultural Resources: Historic Resources

1. Theme: Expand the historic district and preserve historic sites, structures and landmarks located throughout Leesburg in order to maintain the town's historic character.
2. Theme: Maintain the same architectural integrity and character as the historic district as redevelopment occurs adjacent to or around the historic district.
3. Theme: Encourage a mix of uses in the historic district and ensure sufficient parking to support these uses.
4. Theme: Improve streetscaping and the appearance of older buildings and neighborhoods in order to maintain the character of the historic district.
5. Theme: Plant trees in order to promote the creation of tree canopy in the historic district.

Group 2—Urban Design

1. Theme: Preserve historic character of downtown, enhancing it with compatible infill, better property maintenance, and improved streetscapes.
2. Theme: Protect historic resources outside of downtown and use them to influence new development.
3. Theme: Make new development human-scaled, of good architectural design—compatible with the town’s historic character—and quality construction, fronting on well-designed streetscapes.
4. Theme: Create a sense of place with gateways, identifiable boundaries, protected views, and new development that reflect Leesburg’s architectural traditions.
5. Theme: Improve existing and create better new public spaces—streetscapes, green areas, gateways, river corridors.
6. Theme: Special areas: historic district and northern entrance preserved, East Market Street and other commercial areas redeveloped to be more like the historic district, preserve/improve views of vantage points (Home Depot, Catoctin Mountain).

Group 2—Cultural Resources: Views

1. Theme: Preserve existing viewsheds and improved gateways at the entrances to Leesburg and to the historic district.
2. Theme: Restrict building heights and consider architectural design to ensure compatibility with existing development and to allow for scenic views throughout town.
3. Theme: Consider aesthetics of development located at high points throughout town.

Group 2—Cultural Resources: Arts

1. Theme: Develop new cultural facilities and events to enhance quality of life and economic development.
2. Theme: Provide cultural resources and events supportive of the town’s diverse population.

Group 3—Demographics

1. Theme: Provide higher wage jobs, more affordable workforce housing (especially for seniors), and related services in order to provide a more balanced community and to reduce the cost of living for all residents.
2. Theme: Encourage and provide activities and opportunities for all residents of all ages, and especially for minorities and teenagers.
3. Theme: Involve government more with citizens; similarly, involve citizens more in the community as a whole.
4. Theme: Consider the fiscal impacts (residential vs. nonresidential) when determining additional housing needs.

Group 3—Housing

1. Theme: Encourage affordable housing for all ages and incomes, in a variety of housing types.
2. Theme: Do not allow for housing on land zoned for nonresidential purposes in order to encourage nonresidential growth to support the town's tax base.
3. Theme: Encourage the incorporation of residential development into commercial infill projects.

Group 3—Public Services and Facilities

1. Theme: Provide all students with a comprehensive and top quality educational experience.
2. Theme: Encourage public/citizen civic pride and a sense of community through more community events, leisure activities for all, etc.—increased citizen interaction.
3. Theme: Encourage a more responsive relationship between the town government and the citizens, particularly regarding questions of growth of the town.
4. Theme: Provide a safe and secure town for its citizens.
5. Theme: Maintain the current high level of curbside service and the 25% recycling goal.
6. Theme: Establish a stormwater management utility.

Group 3—Urban Growth Area (UGA)

1. Theme: Annex land into the town in order to allow for the growth of the commercial tax base.
2. Theme: Do not annex land into the town—instead concentrate growth as infill in areas where infrastructure exists.
3. Theme: Develop mixed-use centers, (both with and without a residential and community facility component) at the perimeter of the town.
4. Theme: Preserve recreation areas, the rural landscape, and environmentally sensitive areas at the edge of town.
5. Theme: Improve the transportation system (including mass transit) to accommodate growth in the town and UGA.

Group 4—Economic Development

1. Theme: Attract businesses that will diversify the tax base and reduce the residential tax burden.
2. Theme: Provide higher wage jobs by attracting high tech businesses to the town.
3. Theme: Provide a business friendly community.
4. Theme: Expand tourism as an economic component.
5. Theme: Provide for growth of the airport.
6. Theme: Attract appropriate business use whose design is compatible to the town's historic character and economic vision.
7. Theme: Provide appropriate educational opportunities for citizens.
8. Theme: Increase cultural and arts opportunities throughout the town.
9. Theme: Special areas: The broader notion of community development and quality of life must be part of the Leesburg economic development potential when discussing cultural, business, residential, educational, use and design.

Group 4—Transportation

1. Themes: Improve interconnectivity of roadways, walkways, and bike paths within the town's residential and commercial areas.
2. Themes: Design roads that are complementary to the town's historic character, provide traffic calming, and are human scaled and be aesthetically pleasing.
3. Theme: Provide an appropriate public transportation system.
4. Theme: Provide the appropriate parking systems/opportunities throughout the town.
5. Theme: Design appropriate pedestrian and bicycle transportation system throughout the town.
6. Theme: Develop the airport's potential as part of the town's transportation network.
7. Theme: Special areas: truck traffic and through traffic in residential areas, Crosstrial Boulevard, Battlefield Parkway, congestion on Route 7 east and west of town, coordination of traffic signals throughout the town, congestion on US 15 Bypass and Business.

Group 5—Natural Resources

1. Theme: Establish criteria to delineate a boundary between the areas of the landscape for which human use and alteration is appropriate, and those areas best left to nature or designated for restoration. Develop a methodology for implementing an open space preservation and restoration system for ecologically valuable lands. Water resources, topography and vegetation should provide the framework for this system. These open space areas should become a part of the town's green infrastructure.
2. Theme: Develop an environmental assessment process to determine the impacts of development proposals and cost—effective mitigation measures.
3. Theme: Prioritize natural resources management recommendations by topic, emphasizing those issues that can be affected by land use decisions.
4. Theme: Implement environmental policies through the development review process using tools like minimum impact development and conservation subdivision design techniques.
5. Theme: Evaluate the environmental recommendations of the Loudoun County Revised General Plan to determine how applicable they are to Leesburg in order to make the two plans as compatible as practical.

6. Theme: Develop an environmental monitoring system to measure progress toward implementing the town's objectives.
7. Theme: Assess all town policies and ordinances to determine whether they conflict with the environmental policies of the plan.
8. Theme: Establish policies for the restoration and protection of Leesburg's water resources, such as the Tuscarora Creek and Town Branch.
9. Theme: Restore natural vegetation and forest canopy for wildlife habitat, scenery, and microclimate control wherever conditions permit.
10. Theme: Establish a street tree program for the town.
11. Theme: Designate a green belt around the perimeter of the town to help give the town a sense of place distinct from the rest of Loudoun County.
12. Theme: Protect residents from unacceptable levels of aircraft and highway noise.
13. Theme: Adopt site design and building construction measures to reduce energy consumption.
14. Theme: Locate complementary land uses to develop walkable communities, encourage fewer trips, or combined trips to reduce energy consumption and improve air quality.
15. Theme: Maintain an aggressive recycling program to reduce the town's contribution to the solid waste stream.